

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION

REPORT

COUNTRY USSR
SUBJECT BERIA's Fall

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DATE OF INFORMATION

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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the struggle between MALENKOV and BERIA was
not of recent origin was based purely on the conversations
and rumors heard while in Georgia.

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the conflict reached back as far as 1947 when RAPPAVA, A.N.
was dismissed; MALENKOV was probably not
personally involved in this affair. Later, especially from
1950 on, people had started to say that BERIA's star was
waning; MALENKOV was often mentioned as BERIA's enemy. In
1951, this was the general public opinion in Georgia.

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2.

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During World War II, as a member of the National Defense Council and (STALIN, BERIA, MALENKOV, MIKHOYAN, and KHRUSHCHEV or VOROSHILOV) entrusted with the defense organization of the northern Caucasus, BERIA had directly subordinate to him all military and civilian authorities in this region. His immediate assistants at that time were BAKRADZE, V.M., and STURUA, (fnu) or GOGUA, V.B. This meant that everything ordered by the authorities (whether civilian or military) in the Caucasus during World War II was done either on BERIA's orders or at least with his consent. In this connection, the expulsion and resettlement of entire national groups (Kabardintsy, Ingushi, Cherkesy, and others) from the Caucasus to middle Asia was ordered by BERIA.

3.

War II in the Headquarters of the Transcaucasian Army Group, and afterward probably in the Headquarters of the Transcaucasian Military District or some similar organization.

4.

STALIN was in Georgia in July and August 1951. this fact was not published in the press, but practically everybody in Georgia knew it. STALIN spent these two months mostly in the "radioactive" spas at Tskhaltuba and also at Borzhomi. On the way to Tskhaltuba, he went through Kutaisi, where it was rumored he requested to be taken to the Jewish part of town which was known for its poverty and slums. The fact that STALIN went to this part of Kutaisi, which is quite a distance from the center of town, led people to believe that he had been informed of the conditions there. STALIN was very displeased. He expressed dissatisfaction also that the Kutaisi City Theater, construction of which had started before World War II, was not yet completed. According to another rumor, STALIN was quite angry when, on his way from Moscow to Kutaisi he noticed the dilapidated railroad station at Samtredia; (railroad junction on the route from Moscow to Sukhumi and Batumi). He allegedly said it "had been in the same condition for the last 35 years". In Tskhaltuba he discovered that the nicest villa (really a palace) was occupied by the resort director, while the rest homes and sanitariums were in poor condition. As a result, the villa was immediately converted for use as a children's sanitarium. All of this and many other things discovered by STALIN during this trip were never published, but people talked a great deal about it. After he left Georgia, STALIN went to Sochi (or the Crimea) and then to Moscow. STALIN did not return to Moscow until mid-November; he did not participate in the November 1951 celebration of the October Revolution. There were many rumors in Georgia that STALIN was ill and had gone south to recover his health. 25X1
why STALIN waited until November 1951 to start the purge; 25X1
probably nobody knew. If STALIN was ill, that could have been the reason. 25X1

Even those who did not definitely state that

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MALENKOV was in Tbilisi at that time believed that the purge was directed personally by MALENKOV. The explanation for STALIN's having entrusted MALENKOV with this job was that the situation in Georgia was so grave (and so many of BERIA's friends were responsible) that STALIN could not entrust the purge to BERIA, who had evidently kept him misinformed as to conditions in Georgia.

5.

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no information
on ABAKUMOV, except that he was ousted sometime in 1951;

the MGB powers were attacked through the personal prestige of BERIA. Although he had not been directly connected with the MGB for several years, BERIA was still considered, rightly or wrongly, as the man who had built and kept his power through the MGB.

6.

It could be assumed that after the blow delivered by MALENKOV to Georgian political circles, BERIA protested very strongly against the harsh treatment of Georgian politicians and received STALIN's permission to make a trip to Georgia in order to clarify the situation. It is a speculation that BERIA tried to persuade CHARKVIANI to use his influence as the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Georgian SSR, in the restoration of BERIA's ousted friends. Assuming that CHARKVIANI refused to cooperate, it would be logical for BERIA to have turned against CHARKVIANI and to have accused him of co-responsibility for crimes committed by his immediate subordinates. Such an attitude would have been very typically Migrelian. Since in his position as First Secretary CHARKVIANI could, indeed, hardly have claimed innocence of what was going on under his nose, his ouster by BERIA would not appear to have been a particularly difficult achievement. If on the other hand the November 1951 purge was caused by MALENKOV, and he had special reasons for sparing CHARKVIANI, BERIA's ouster of CHARKVIANI may be considered as a counter-blow against MALENKOV.

7.

DEKANOSOV served with the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, probably until April 1953, when he was appointed Minister of the Interior, Georgian SSR. The general public opinion had always considered DEKANOSOV as a staunch follower of BERIA. there were rumors that DEKANOSOV had been arrested in 1951. no information on MERKULOV, except that he, like DEKANOSOV, was one of BERIA's closest friends.

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8.

Prominent Migrelians who were close associates of BERIA were:

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- a. GOGUA, V.B.; President of the Presidium, Supreme Soviet, Georgian SSR, until early 1952.
- b. NACHKEBIYA, (fnu); head of MVD militia, Georgian, SSR, probably until 1948.
- c. I.S. ZODELAVA, Secretary, Central Committee of the Komsomol, Georgian SSR, until the end of 1951 or the beginning of 1952.
- d. RAPAVA, A.N.; MGB Minister until 1948; Minister of Justice until 1953; Minister of State Control in early 1953.
- e. SHONIYA, V.Y.; Attorney General, Georgian SSR, until 1951.
- f. BARAMIYA, M.I.; Second Secretary, Central Committee, CP, Georgian SSR, until November 1951.
- g. S.F. STURUA, President of the Council of Ministers, Georgian SSR, until 1948.

BAGIROV's relations with MALENKOV and BERIA are unknown
BAGIROV, M.D.A. was Minister President of Azerbaijan SSR.

The following information about BAKRADZE may be of interest; he was one of the closest collaborators of BERIA over the last 20 years. Very significant was his speech before the Supreme Soviet, Georgian SSR, on 15 April 1953, introducing the new Georgian Government which had been organized in compliance with BERIA's wishes. In his speech /as translated from the editorial published in the Georgian newspaper Kommunisty on 16 April 1953/ BAKRADZE, V.M., among other things, said the following: "...I do not consider it necessary to give you the characteristics of the members of the new Georgian government. I want only to emphasize that all of them are well-known members of the CP educated in the LENIN-STALIN spirit, i.e., members of the organization which was led in Georgia by the best Georgian son, the beloved disciple of STALIN, L.P. BERIA.... As it has been proven by responsible authorities, the recent charges brought against Comrades RAPAVA, ZODELVA, BARAMIYA, and others were completely faked...." It is significant that BAKRADZE used the term "responsible authorities" (sootvetstvuyushchiye organy) and not "the Party", which was the only proper organ to clear and to re-establish these highest Party functionaries. interpret the term "responsible authorities" as MGB officials acting on BERIA's initiative. If this were true, it could be assumed that BAKRADZE was already anticipating a change of events and wanted to disassociate himself from BERIA.

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